



State Capitol | Lansing, Michigan 48913

PH (517) 373.7350 | FAX (517) 373.9228

www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/senator/patterson/

For Immediate Release
Feb. 22, 2006

Contact: Christopher Kelley
Phone (517) 373-0051

Patterson: “Never forget their sacrifices”

LANSING – Should memorials to our honored veterans or fallen soldiers be subject to encroachment? Should memorials be displaced or hidden from view, the land on which they stand whittled away for other uses?

Not according to Sen. Bruce Patterson.

“Let us never forget those who served, the sacrifices they made,” Patterson, R-Canton, told the Senate Seniors’ and Veterans’ Affairs Committee on Feb. 22. “Were it not for their service, we would not be here today freely discussing our government.”

Patterson sponsored Senate Bills 881 and 882, which will set necessary safeguards for memorials on state land. The bills establish a Veterans’ Memorial Property Commission and a companion property act to oversee and protect these state military monuments. No other state in the nation has such a law, which could become a model piece of legislation.

The committee also took public testimony on the bills. Mr. Ronald L. Nickels of Plymouth Township, adjutant of American Legion Post 251, was among those who traveled to Lansing to offer testimony in support of the bills.

“When there is encroachment on dedicated land, part of a memorial, we feel this is an insult to living veterans, and to the fallen,” said Mr. Nickels.

Sen. Patterson concurred, adding, “There is nothing now in Michigan law to prevent such encroachment on military memorials. Indeed, we have heard that a restaurant chain wanted to build on the Gettysburg battlefield. We can start by setting standards here in Michigan. We owe such an incalculable debt to those who have given their lives for our freedom. Protecting their monuments is a significant way to show our respect and appreciation to our living veterans. We exalt the memory of those who gave their all for us.”

The committee sent both bills to the Senate with recommendation.

###